

## NO 49

## Miscellaneous

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At length arrived the important day of the dinner party. We were called upon to define the meaning of the term dinner-party, we should denominate it an awful immolation of mind to matter, a wanton sacrifice of the head to the stomach. Why on a hot summer's day, eighteen individuals in their proper senses, who might dine at home, if they chose, should agree of their own free-will to victimize themselves and each other, by congregating together in one room, for the space of two mortal hours, to eat, and in the case of the lords of the creation, probably to drink also, a great deal more than is good for them, is one of those social problems of which we expect to arrive at the solution about the time when mankind is thoroughly regenerated by Miss Martineau's atheological views, but not before. If there were no other argument against this insane system of monster dinner-parties, the frightful state of di-comfort into which the family of the giver of the feast is thrown by the coming event, would alone be sufficient to prove our case. Unless the satialism be on a seal-analogous to that of the individual who, on finding the number of his guests exceeded the means of conveyance provided for them, coolly ordered round 'more phaetons,' anarchy and confusion reign predominant throughout the devoted mansion for at least four-and-twenty hours before the affair comes off. In the first place, the servants, male and female, all go mad; if you give an order, the recipient stares you vacantly in the face, and does something else immediately. If you lay down a book, or any similar article, in its proper place, somebody instantly removes it and hides in an improper one, where you are fortunate if you stumble upon it by accident in the course of the following six months. The lunacy of the servants reacts upon their betters, everybody is a little out of temper, everybody is over-officious, and has a way of his or her own for doing everything diametrically opposed to the variously diverging ways of everybody else. From the earliest dawn the very garrets are resolute of making soup, which odor remains in possession of the house till about the time when luncheon should be but of course is not forthcoming; it is then superseded, and retires vice the venison put down to roast which we would rather deprecate should be put down as nuisance, at least as far as regards our olfactory nerves. But it were an endless task to attempt to sun up all the miseries incidental to the preparations for celebrating one of those feasts of reason, nor do we expect sympathy of the gentle public to sympathize in our views, for in every society which we have as yet frequented, *L'Amphitryon ou l'on dine* though be as heavy as his own dinners, is certain to be a popular man. Of a truth, it is feeding the hungry with good things, is the least unfashionable of all the Christian duties; we wish it may help those who thus practice it, on their road to heaven, and we have little doubt it will do so as efficiently as its antagonistic virtue, fasting, whatever a certain Wiseman and his followers may hold to the contrary.

However all this may be, one thing is certain, that Harry Coverdale, on the morning preceding the dinner-party at the Grange, experiencing in his proper person many of the inconveniences alluded to, and having made several attempts to improve his position, by seeking to induce somebody to do something sensible or agreeable, all of which proved abortive, by reason of the impossibility of extracting Alice from the vortex of preparation—Harry Coverdale, thus victimized, *faute de mieux* undertook his good deed, and set off to ride away from the blue devils; but the remedy did not succeed—the devils follow'd him, and grew bluer every mile he passed; and the bluest of them all assumed the likeness of Mr. Crane.

'Confound Mr. Crane'—thus ran Harry's thoughts—'Confound the old fellow; he's coming to marry Alice'—his dear warm-hearted little friend Alice. I don't by any means approve of it if he's old enough to be her father, or anybody else's, for that matter—it's ridiculous—quite absurd—besides, the dear little girl dislikes him, naturally she does: there's nothing to like in him—why, she cares more about me than she does about him.' He paused a thought, removed his hat, pushed back his thick clustering hair, put it on again, and continued, 'If I don't entirely made up my mind against marrying, I'd enter for the stakes myself, and see if one could not jockey the old fellow and governor Hazlehurst too. Alice is a prize worth chasing; but it's too late to change her's mind now; I ought to have behaved differently to her at first, if I'd wanted her to fall in love with me—though I think I've got over all that pretty roughly, too. Ah! well, I've chosen my line, and must stick to it; and as the shooting is a-on-but-over, I'll off now, thank goodness, I shall contrive to make it out somehow, I daresay—and, my love there's a dear one, I'll be back of birds singing themselves in at great life—fire of six coveys all together—and stunning good

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A certain lot of land, situated in the city of Newport, bounded on the north by the city of Westerly, on the east by the city of Westerly, on the west by the city of Westerly, and on the south by the city of Westerly, containing one and one-half acres, more or less, and situated on the land of R. H. Lyster. By the mortgagee, W. VARNON.  
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